

Appl. No. 09/884,651
Amendment Dated Jun. 28, 2004
Reply to Final Office Action of Apr. 28, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENT

I. Status of the Claims

Claims 1-26 are pending.

Claims 20-23 are rejected.

Claims 24 and 25 are objected to.

Claims 1-19 and 26 are allowed.

II. After Final Claim Amendments

Claim 20 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 24 and intervening claim 23. Claim 20, as amended, now contains all the limitations of claim 24, and is thus commensurate in scope and coverage with claim 24. Claims 23 and 24 have been canceled. The claim amendments do not require an additional search as no new limitations have been added. Claims 20 and 25, as amended, are fully supported by the specification. Applicants' respectfully request entry of the amendments to advance the application to allowance.

III. Claim Objections

Claims 24 and 25 are objected to for being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Applicants appreciate the

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offer to rewrite claims 24 and 25 in independent form.
Instead, base claim 20 has been amended to be commensurate in scope with claim 24. As the limitations of claim 24 (and intervening claim 23) have been added to the claim. Claims 23 and 24 have been canceled without prejudice.

Claim 25 depends from claim 20 and is allowable for the reasons given for claim 20. The objection to claim 25 is now rendered moot.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and removal of the objections to claim 24, which has been canceled, and claim 25, which now depends from an allowable base claim.

IV. Claim Rejections Under 35 USC 103

Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boehm et al. (USPN 6,218,453) in view of Shaw et al. (USPN 5,009,427). The rejection is moot in light of the amendments to claim 20 adding the limitations of claim 23 and 24. This combination has been deemed allowable by the examiner. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of claim 20.

Claim 21 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boehm et al. (USPN 6,218,453) in

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view of Shaw et al. (USPN 5,009,427) and further in view of
Statz (USPN 4,801,649).

Claim 21 and 22 depend from claim 20 and are allowable
for the same reasons given for claim 20. The rejections of
claims 21 and 22 are rendered moot due to their dependency
from an allowable base claim. Applicants respectfully
request reconsideration and removal of the rejections of
claims 21 and 22.

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V. Conclusion

Based on the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the amendments to the claims be entered and all rejections be withdrawn and the application be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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Jeffrey D. Washville